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FM AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1199  
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE

UNCLAS BRAZZAVILLE 000301

KINSHASA FOR USAID  
NAIROBI FOR USAID/OFDA  
DEPT FOR AF/C

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: OFDA EAID AEMR SOCI CF  
SUBJECT: CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE - APRES CETTE MOIS, LE DELUGE

¶11. Brazzaville is an unclassified post.

¶12. Summary. Torrential rains began in early November in Congo-Brazzaville (RoC). The small rainy season, designated October 1 through December 15, (Mid-Feb to May is the Big Rainy Season), had a mild start this year, but the ferocity and volume of rain that has fallen in the past week has made up for the late start. The GRoC does not provide assistance to its flood victims. This cable serves as a preliminary to a possible request for assistance if the rain displaces Congolese residents of Brazzaville. End Summary.

¶13. DCM met with Minister of Solidarity (MoS) to determine the status of a national plan to address flooding, victims of flooding, and the possibility of cholera. Minister Bawao assured DCM that a plan has been put in place since last year, that a copy of the plan would be sent to the Embassy (it has not yet been received) and that the GRoC is working through several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to develop assistance programs. President Denis Sassou-Nguesso visited Brazzaville suburbs - the first time he had ever set foot in many of the neighborhoods - to view the rain damage. He announced that an emergency committee would be established, but no further word has been given about funds to address the victims of flooding or an established national emergency plan.

¶14. On Monday, November 10 the local media reported that a cemetery in a southern suburb of Brazzaville has begun to flood and erosion is causing the coffins to be seen from the surface. Four cases of cholera have been reported in the Kindamba region south of Brazzaville. The main route leading out of Brazzaville to the north has been cut in two by massive erosion. Paving of main thoroughfares this past year has created an unforeseen problem - the new roads and sidewalks are six inches above the first floor of the homes lining the streets, and water is pouring into homes that had not been previously affected by flooding. The majority of food is brought to Brazzaville by rail from Pointe Noire and the railway has already suffered delays due to flooding. Should rain delay the train, food prices will increase as food becomes scarce.

¶15. Post initiated an effort with various NGOs this past year to develop an on-going sustainable plan, but without any financial support, the Red Cross and other NGOs are not able to stockpile assistance supplies or promote the cleaning of gutters that are blocked with plastic and trash. In 2006-07, OFDA was able to respond to Post's emergency request for funding to assist flood victims, and this cable is provided as an alert to OFDA that assistance may be required again.

EASTHAM